

## **PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD**

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2003**

**3:00 P.M., J. MARTIN GRIESEL ROOM, CENTENNIAL PLAZA II**

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:00 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with members Bloomfield, Kirk, Kreider, Senhauser, and Spraul-Schmidt present. Absent: Raser, Sullebarger, and Wallace

### **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Monday, November 17, 2003 meeting were unanimously approved (motion by Sullebarger, second by Kreider).

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 318 MILTON STREET, PROSPECT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam presented the staff report on this request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the rehabilitation of the building located at 318 Milton Street, a contributing resource within the Prospect Hill Historic District. Included in the application is a proposal to construct a fourth floor penthouse addition.

Ms. Kellam described the building as a shell with no roof and with portions of the side and rear elevation walls missing. There are no windows, some missing lintels and an inappropriate door is installed in the front entrance.

The applicant proposes to restore the missing lintels, windows and doors. All of the windows are proposed to be 1/1 double hung aluminum windows to fit the original openings. The fourth floor addition will set back 12'-8", to match the setback of the penthouse addition on the next-door (twin) building at 320 Milton Street. The addition will have fiber cement horizontal siding with a 4" exposure. The addition will not be seen from the street; however, there is a vacant lot immediately to the west of the building, so the addition will be exposed on that side elevation.

Ms. Kellam distributed a revised set of drawings, which show the door on the fourth floor addition as a single glazed full light door. Additionally, the drawings show more detail of the front railing and the rear elevation.

Mr. Derrick Tarver of 319 Boal Street attended the pre-hearing. Mr. Tarver represented himself, Marilyn Smith (317 Boal Street) and Robert Adams (321 Boal Street) - all with properties located behind 318 Milton. Their primary concern was with obstruction of views. In a follow-up letter, Mr. Tarver, Ms. Smith, and Mr. Adams indicated they were supportive of the renovation; however, they wanted to ensure that the historic character of the neighborhood would be maintained and that the addition would not exceed the roofline height of the penthouse on 320 Milton Street. Ms. Kellam stated that she received no communication regarding the project from the Prospect Hill Neighborhood Association or from the Mt. Auburn Community Council.

Ms. Kellam explained that the proposal could better meet the Prospect Hill Historic District guidelines by restoring the transom above the entry door and installing a four panel solid wood door. Additionally, a four panel solid wood door would be more appropriate for the front one-story addition. Ms. Kellam replied to Mr. Kreider that the

10' height of the proposed addition would match that of 320 Milton Street and that the penthouse on 320 Milton is a non-original addition.

The applicant/designer Delbert Ogle was present to respond to questions from the Board. Mr. Senhauser observed that multiple surfaces would be visible since the building is the end of the row. He questioned if in addition to the proposed fiber cement siding and existing brick on the exposed side elevation, a portion of the brick was stuccoed. Mr. Ogle replied that he believed it was stucco over brick. In response to Mr. Kirk, Mr. Ogle stated that the existing exterior wall on the exposed side would be flush with the addition. Mr. Krieder agreed with Mr. Senhauser that the entire side wall should be uniform in texture and color. Mr. Ogle was amenable to the suggestion.

### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Bloomfield, second by Kreider) to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the rehabilitation and addition at 318 Milton Street with the following conditions:

1. Restore the transom at the front entrance and install a four-panel wood door;
2. Install a full light door in the penthouse addition;
3. Install a four panel wood door in the front one-story addition;
4. Install 1/1 double hung aluminum windows to fit the original openings;
5. Revise the west elevation exterior treatments for more uniformity of materials;  
and
6. Final plans for the rehabilitation and the addition are submitted to the Urban Conservator for approval prior to issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness or building permit.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 2632 CLEINVIEW AVENUE, CLEINVIEW-HACKBERRY HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam presented the staff report on this application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a two-car garage behind the residence at 2632 Cleinview Avenue.

Ms. Kellam stated that construction of a new garage began without the issuance of a building permit and continued even after the project was scheduled to be heard before the Historic Conservation Board. The applicant/owner, Michael Fischer, is constructing the garage on a concrete pad from the previous garage. He has indicated that it will be the same size and design as the former garage, with the exception of omitting windows on the south (side) and east (rear) elevations, which are along property lines. Ms. Kellam pointed out that no comparison could be made since there are no pictures of the previous garage.

Overall, the proposed garage meets the historic district guidelines; however, it would be more compatible if (as the original had) additional windows were added to the exposed south (side) elevation. Ms. Kellam stated that staff recommended introducing two 1/1 windows on this elevation, similar in proportion to those on the opposite side. The applicant is hesitant to add windows since those on the former garage were often broken. Ms. Kellam added that no variances are required for the garage as proposed.

Mr. Kirk questioned if the garage was similar in detail with other garages in the neighborhood, pointing out that it appears flat compared to the ornate detailing of the

house. Ms. Kellam stated that it is similar to others, although the design is simpler. She added that the previous garage was not an original garage – possibly constructed in the 50's and reiterated that the applicant has indicated he is reconstructing the garage to match what was there.

Mr. Fischer was present to address the Board. He explained that he continued construction on the garage to protect it from the elements. Mr. Senhauser stated that there are alternative garage doors available at a competitive cost that would present a better scale and proportion than the proposed metal doors. Mr. Fischer responded that the original garage was not historic and had plain wood doors with no windows. The doors the Board was considering were more costly. He added that did not want to add windows to the south elevation, because they would inevitably be broken and have to be boarded up. Mr. Senhauser replied that he was not as concerned with the windows, as the nature of the garage doors. He pointed out that the primary visible elements are the garage doors since they encompass the entire face of the building. Mr. Fischer replied that he intended to paint the doors gray with white trim to match the house. He added that the doors he is proposing are of the same scale as the originals. Mr. Bloomfield suggested that the applicant work with staff in considering alternative garage doors.

Mr. Kreider explained to the applicant, that the Board, in an effort to expedite window and doors issues, compiled a notebook of windows and doors offered by local manufacturers that are appropriate for historic districts.

### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Bloomfield, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to approve the construction of the two-car garage as per plans submitted with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant consult with staff to look at alternative doors; and
2. Final plans and any revisions be reviewed and approved by the Urban Conservator prior to issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness and a building permit.

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 1910-1912 VINE STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Urban Conservator William Forwood provided an overview and update regarding this application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the building located at 1910-1912 Vine Street, within the Over-the-Rhine Historic District. Mr. Forwood explained on September 29, 2003, the owner/applicant Navneet Sachdev was convicted for failing to maintain the building at 1910-1912 Vine Street within vacant building maintenance license (VBML) standards and sentenced to incarceration for 180 days. Subsequently, the court released Mr. Sachdev to allow him the opportunity to arrange for the repair or demolition of the building.

Mr. Sachdev applied for a demolition permit on October 22, 2003. Staff provided the applicant with a list of the required documentation to demonstrate that he could not make a reasonable rate of return on the property without demolishing the building. The applicant provided staff with information; however, the documentation does not support Mr. Sachdev's case for demolition. In fact, the documentation supports a case for preserving the building since it shows that the only way he would lose money is by

demolishing the building. Staff 's recommendation, therefore, is to not permit the demolition.

Mr. Forwood explained that Mr. Sachdev was to appear in court again this morning either having brought the building up to standards or having demolished it. As of this past Friday (December 5, 2003), Mr. Sachdev had not begun work on the building. He had indicated he would be present at this meeting if the court released him.

In response to Mr. Krieder, Mr. Forwood stated that he has not received information from the building inspector as to the current disposition. Mr. Forwood explained since Mr. Sachdev did not satisfied the court's request, it is likely he will remain incarcerated until the building is brought up to VBML standards, the building is demolished, or 180 days, which ever comes first.

### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Spraul-Schmidt, second by Bloomfield) to take the following actions:

1. Find that the building at 1910-1912 Vine Street is a contributing building within the Over-the-Rhine Historic District;
2. Find that the demolition of 1910-1912 Vine Street will have a negative effect on the streetscape and the historic character of the neighborhood;
3. Find that based on Mr. Sachdev's estimates for the cost of renovating the property and Huff Realty's rental projections, Mr. Sachdev could realize an economic return from the renovation and rental of 1910-1912 Vine Street;
4. Find that based on Huff Realty's estimated market values for 1910-1912 Vine Street, Mr. Sachdev could realize an economic return from the sale of the property in either its present or improved state;
5. Find that based on Huff Realty's estimated market values for 1910-1912 Vine Street, Mr. Sachdev would suffer an economic loss from the sale of the property as an open unimproved lot; and
6. Deny a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of 1910-1912 Vine Street, finding that the applicant has failed to demonstrate that he could not realize an economic return from rehabilitation or sale of the property.

### **PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW, 320 READING ROAD, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Adrienne Cowden stated that this application is for a preliminary design review of potential renovations to the building at 320 Reading Road. The applicant/realtor, Karen Domine is acting on behalf of the potential buyer (Arnold S. Levine) and looking for input on the proposed work. Ms. Cowden informed the Board that Ms. Domine had indicated she would be in attendance at the preliminary design review to present and consider alternatives; however, she was not present.

Urban Conservator Forwood explained that there were two basic issues involved with the proposed renovations. Mr. Levine would like to remove the existing metal overhead garage door on the main (south) façade and extend the storefront through this area. The greater issue involves proposed alterations to the rear (north) elevation. Because of

security problems and the openness of the parking lot behind the building, Mr. Levine would like to remove the existing sash and garage door on the rear elevation and infill the openings with concrete block. Staff informed the applicant that compatible alterations to the elevations would be possible, but the Board would not likely approve the alterations to the rear elevation as proposed.

### **BOARD ACTION**

Because this was a preliminary design review, no action was required; however, the Board concluded that closing the entirety of the masonry opening in the rear would not be acceptable. The Board noted that the proposal is incomplete and suggested that an architect be involved to assist in the renovation plans.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### *Cincinnati's African-American Heritage Marker Initiative*

Ms. Cowden informed the Board that the Cincinnati Museum Center is sponsoring an initiative to mark approximately 13 African-American sites in downtown, Evanston, Walnut Hills, and the West End. Due to the great distances between potential markers, Ms. Cowden stated she is proposing the project be phased. The first phase would incorporate downtown sites into a walking tour. Once interest is generated, the tour could be expanded to include more distant sites. The hope is to complete the markers prior to the opening of the National Underground Freedom Center, next year. Ms. Cowden stated that she anticipated presenting the Board with the text and locations for their approval in January 2004.

Mr. Forwood stated that the Board would not be required to take formal action under the historic legislation. In reviewing the marker at the Mercantile Library, it was agreed that the text and locations would have to be approved by the City Planning Commission (CPC) since they have the authority to mark historic and artistic sites in the City. The Historic Conservation Board's agreement with CPC was that the Board would have the opportunity to review the text and whether the sites are appropriate to mark from an historic standpoint.

#### *Correspondence*

#### 3742 Sachem Avenue

Mr. Forwood brought to the Board's attention letters of formal notification to the Zoning Board of Appeals and Clerk of Council to appeal the Board's decision regarding 3742 Sachem Avenue. Mr. Forwood explained that Council hears appeals regarding decisions on Certificates of Appropriateness; whereas, the Zoning Board of Appeals hears decisions regarding environmental quality and zoning variance issues. The letters were submitted by Mark Godbey, attorney for Mr. and Mrs. Daniel G. Lloyd, Jr., who own the property at 3748 Sachem, directly north (uphill) of 3742 Sachem.

Ms. Spraul-Schmidt questioned if it would be appropriate for the Board to respond to inaccuracies in the letter, specifically that the Board approved a 24' setback, increasing the proposed 21' by 3' specifically to accommodate the views of 3748 Sachem Avenue. Mr. Krieder replied that if there were any factual inconsistencies within the letters that misconstrue the record, it would be appropriate for the Board to correct the record. Mr.

Forwood confirmed that the Board would be represented by counsel from the City Solicitor's Office.

2960-2968 Annwood Street

Staff received correspondence written to the attention of the Historic Conservation Board from Rick Donaldson of 2956 Annwood Street. In the letter, Mr. Donaldson expressed concern with the final approval given by the Urban Conservator for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of the new house at 2960-2968 Annwood Street in East Walnut Hills. Mr. Forwood stated that upon the direction of the Board, staff would provide a report addressing issues raised in the letter and include the approved final drawings for comparison with those approved by the Board. The Board agreed that a staff report would be beneficial for them to examine the issues raised by Mr. Donaldson.

Mr. Krieder questioned if staff could ascertain which garages were not in compliance as referenced by Mr. Donaldson in his letter. Although staff could not be certain (since addresses were not specified in the letter), they believed it was referencing garages at 1884 Wold Avenue and 1870 Madison Road. Mr. Senhauser recollected that the garage at 1870 Madison was moved closer to the street to save a tree. He stated that the Historic Conservation Board did not re-hear the application, so the approval was likely given by the Urban Conservator at that time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned.

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William L. Forwood  
Urban Conservator

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John C. Senhauser  
Chairman

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Date